

## **2013 Report of the Fire Department**

I am pleased to present the 131<sup>st</sup> annual report of the Abington Fire-Rescue & Emergency Services Department for the year 2013.

First and foremost, I would like to remember Abington resident Sgt. Daniel Vasselian, USMC; Abington Veteran's Agent Joseph Colantoni; and Abington Park & Recreation Superintendant Mark Chirokas, who our community lost during the year. The Fire Department owes each of them a debt of gratitude for their years of service and sacrifice, and they are sadly missed.

The Abington Fire Department continued to see personnel changes throughout the year, due to retirements and new members to replace them.

Firefighter/EMT Intermediate Michael Murphy retired from the department in January, after serving for 37 years. Firefighter Murphy was also the Fire Alarm Superintendant, and had served as an acting captain.

Firefighter/EMT Intermediate Michael "Donald" Farrell retired in February after serving 34 years. Firefighter Farrell was a long time S.A.F.E. Instructor, who taught many children fire safety.

Firefighter/Paramedic Don DiDomenico left the department in March to move out of state, after serving for 16 years. Firefighter DiDomenico was one of the department's founding paramedics, and had been a member of the Abington Police Tactical Team as medical support.

I wish to thank each of these members for their service to the residents of Abington, and wish them all good luck in their future endeavors.

These vacancies were quickly filled by three new members, who all became fully trained Firefighter/Paramedics by December.

Firefighter/Paramedic Derek Haimaidi was hired in March, after briefly serving on the Lakeville Fire Department. Firefighter Haimaidi also proudly served as a member of the U.S. Army Airborne, and graduated from the Massachusetts Firefighting Academy in November.

Firefighter/Paramedic Michael Kolodziej, an Abington resident, was hired in June as an experienced paramedic from the private sector.

Firefighter/Paramedic Katherine Kline was also hired in June. Kate proudly served her country as a U. S. Army MP in Iraq prior to becoming a paramedic. Paramedics Kolodziej and Kline were assigned to our spare ambulance from June to September, and were able to utilize their paramedic skills prior to being trained as firefighters. This also allowed us to operate a second ALS ambulance, on a part-time basis. Mike and Kate attended the Boston Fire Academy, a first for the Town of Abington, and completed their training in December.

2013 was another busy year for the Abington Fire Department, both in terms of continued organizational growth and emergency responses.

A joint Abington-Rockland Fire Department FEMA radio grant allowed the complete replacement of our emergency radio infrastructure. This included all portable, vehicle and station radios, a new dispatch room, computerized audio and video recording capabilities, and an expected increase in overall radio coverage for both departments.

An Abington Fire FEMA grant was awarded to cover the cost of replacing all of our self contained breathing apparatus bottles, which had reached the end of their operational life. A new grant request to replace all fire department hose and water appliances was submitted in November.

A regional dispatch grant was awarded to Holbrook Fire, who continues to perform our emergency dispatch services. This grant will benefit Abington by allowing the dispatch center to provide more services to our department and residents at no additional cost, increase our fire reporting software capabilities, and will provide mobile computers for some of our emergency apparatus.

The municipal fire alarm system began using a computerized control system, both at Abington's Headquarters station and at the Holbrook Dispatch Center. This allows both locations to monitor fire alarms, and make maintenance changes at most alarm locations remotely, for a huge savings in manpower and time.

Fire Department apparatus and equipment underwent many changes in 2013 as well. Town Meeting voters authorized the lease purchase of a new, heavy duty ambulance, which will be self-funded from ambulance receipts. This should be in service by the summer of 2014.

The old yellow Seagrave engine, which was formerly used at the South Weymouth Naval Air Station, was retired for a 1982 Maxim engine, given to us from the Bridgewater Fire Department. This will continue to be named Engine 4 as a spare piece, however is in a much better and useable condition.

An Incident Support Unit began to be reconfigured for fire use from the former Abington Police Command Trailer, which will be used for long duration incidents, technical rescue and dive team activations. A pickup truck was obtained from the Department of Conservation and Recreation surplus vehicle program, and will be placed into service to haul the Incident Support Unit, and various other department needs.

In an effort to keep the 25 year old ladder truck operational for a few more years, all wheels and tires were replaced in July.

Other equipment which was purchased from our operational budget throughout the year included 2 portable fire attack monitors, which will enable the fire department to apply up to 500 gallons per minute of water on fires from almost any location on a fireground; 2 hazardous gas detection meters; and a secure storage container for each fire station.

Training continued to be a major priority in 2013, as our members continue to gain experience and expertise. This included the three new members who attended two separate fire academies; Massachusetts Fire Academy classes on a wide range of topics; Plymouth County Technical Rescue and Dive Team Drills, of which Abington Fire now has four members certified and equipped as rescue divers.

Emergency medical protocols and paramedic continuing education was also conducted both within the department and regionally, through our medical control physician at Brockton Hospital.

Several larger fires and incidents occurred throughout the year, with an estimated dollar loss of \$1,164,835. These incidents included a two family residential dwelling fire on Progress Street in January; several chimney fires; several springtime brush fires, one close to an elementary school; a 2 alarm fire at a 12 unit apartment building in July; a commercial garage fire in July; a 2 alarm fire in a strip mall in August; a hazardous materials spill involving hydrogen cyanide in October; two multiple day brush fires in October and November; a 3 alarm residential fire involving propane equipment; and a kitchen fire, both in December.

Other serious incidents throughout the year involved the use of the Jaws of Life, Medflight Helicopter, and activation of the State Hazmat Team.

Abington relied upon the use of mutual aid for fires many more times than we were able to provide it, a trend that will need to be addressed by hiring more firefighters in the future. The area fire departments and state entities that provided direct mutual aid (responded) to Abington in 2013, not counting emergency medical responses include State Fire Marshal Stephen Coan, Avon, Boston Medflight, Bridgewater, Brockton, Department of Fire Services Hazmat & Incident Support Unit, District 2 Fire Control & Tanker, East Bridgewater, Hanover, Hanson, Holbrook, Marshfield, Norwell, Pembroke, Randolph, Rockland, State Police Arson Investigation, West Bridgewater, Weymouth and Whitman.

Abington Fire provided mutual aid fire coverage for Brockton, Holbrook, Rockland and Whitman in 2013.

The Abington Fire Department is proud to provide fire, emergency medical care, all hazard rescue, hazardous materials release, prevention programs and education to our residents. We provide these services directly from our highly trained professional employees, as well as from mutual aid agreements for assistance or specialized equipment.

I wish to thank my fellow Abington residents, taxpayers and voters for supporting your fire department and our budget requests.

I would also like to thank the Town's boards, Town Manager, and all departments for the countless assistance given throughout the year to help keep this department operational, and the town safe.

A special thanks again to Deputy Fire Chief Edward Belcher, who works tirelessly in fire prevention with our residents and business owners to ensure that the homes and buildings within the Town of Abington are safe now and for future generations.

Finally, I wish to thank our most important assets within the fire department, the officers, firefighter /EMT/paramedics, and administrative staff.

Respectfully submitted,

John M. Nuttall  
Chief of Department

### **Members of the Abington Fire-Rescue & Emergency Services Department 2013:**

John M. Nuttall, <i>Chief/EMT-I</i>	Don DiDomenico, <i>Firefighter/Paramedic(R)</i>
Edward F. Belcher, <i>Deputy Chief/EMT</i>	Kevin Finch, <i>Firefighter/Paramedic</i>
Patricia Gordon, <i>Executive Assistant</i>	Richard Smith, <i>Firefighter/Paramedic</i>
David M. Farrell, <i>Captain/EMT</i>	Shawn Hardy, <i>Firefighter/Paramedic</i>
John Glynn, <i>Captain/Paramedic</i>	Brian Fogg, <i>Firefighter/Paramedic</i>
Ronald Howe, <i>Captain/Paramedic</i>	Christopher O'Toole, <i>Firefighter/Paramedic</i>
George Gardiner, Jr., <i>Captain/Paramedic</i>	Matthew Croall, <i>Firefighter/Paramedic</i>
Michael Murphy, <i>Firefighter/EMT-I (Retired)</i>	Justin Silva, <i>Firefighter/Paramedic</i>
Donald M. Farrell, <i>Firefighter/EMT-I (Retired)</i>	Anthony Conso, <i>Firefighter/Paramedic</i>
Michael Driscoll, <i>Firefighter/Paramedic</i>	Jarrod Driscoll, <i>Firefighter/Paramedic</i>
John Force, <i>Firefighter/Paramedic</i>	Christopher Cotti, <i>Firefighter/Paramedic</i>
Robert Neumeister, <i>Firefighter/EMT-I</i>	Derek Haimaidi, <i>Firefighter/Paramedic</i>
	Michael Koldziej, <i>Firefighter/Paramedic</i>
	Katherine Kline, <i>Firefighter/Paramedic</i>

### **The Abington Fire Department responded to 3,382 emergency calls for service, including:**

24	Structure Fires
6	Vehicle Fires
28	Outside/Wildland Fires
9	Other Fires
2,043	Emergency Medical Responses
157	Assist Police
213	Hazardous Conditions
264	Service Calls
137	Good Intent Calls
378	False Alarms
123	All Other Calls

In addition to emergency or service requests, we also provided the following Fire Prevention, Inspectional and Public Safety Services:

868	Inspections
580	Permits
2,224	Open Burning Permits
50	Child Safety Seats Installed